

REMARKS

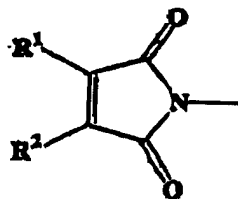
Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's careful review and indication claims 4, 6-7, 10-15, 22 and 24 are allowable.

Applicants, do, however, respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5, 20-21, 23, 25 and 26 would have been novel and unobvious over the newly applied Blum et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,223,582).

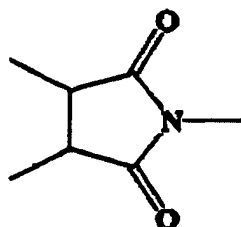
Applicants respectfully submit there is no *prima facie* case of obviousness, especially since there is no teaching in the cited Blum et al. to modify its polymer in any way towards the present invention.

Applicants note that Blum et al. discloses a polymer that has an ethylenically unsaturated group, as claimed in claim 1 (col. 11, line 57 to col. 14, line 11 of Blum et al.). Hereinafter, this polymer is referred to as "polymer (A')."

However, the Blum et al. polymer (A') does not contain any maleimido group in its molecule. The maleimido group is a group shown below:



Rather, what is disclosed by the formulas (I) and (Ia) in Blum et al. is a succinimido group represented by the following formula:



Apparently, the succinimido group does not have any unsaturated double bond at 2 position, contrary to the maleimido group.

Since the present polymer contains the maleimido group, it is easily crosslinked when irradiated with active energy beams in the absence of photopolymerization initiators or in the presence of only a small amount of photopolymerization initiators. See, e.g., specification, page 39, lines 9-14. Since the present polymer further contains an ethylenically unsaturated group, it is excellent in curability and the properties of cured products are improved in comparison to polymers that contain just maleimido groups.

On the other hand, the Blum et al. polymer (A') does not contain a maleimido group(s), and thus must be blended with a large amount of photopolymerization initiators when crosslinked by irradiation with active energy beams. This causes durability of cured products to deteriorate, coloring, fading, peeling of coated films and cracking, and also causes odor(s) resulting from decomposition of photopolymerization initiators. See, e.g., specification at page 3, lines 1-8.

The present invention is both novel and unobvious over Blum et al., since Blum et al. are silent about the polymer containing the maleimido group.

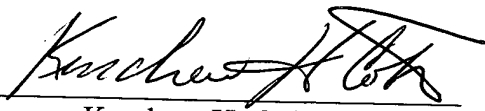
Applicants accordingly respectfully solicit reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

U.S. Appln. No. 09.883,406 - OKAZAKI et al.

Applicants respectfully, but earnestly, solicit a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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